



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee  
Box 31094 Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5P7 (867)-393-6725  
[www.yssc.ca](http://www.yssc.ca)

PRESS RELEASE

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**Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Supports Yukon First Nations in Maintaining a Closure Position  
for Yukon River Chinook**

The Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee (YSSC) continues to recommend a precautionary closure of Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook salmon and appreciates the efforts by Yukon First Nations in fully supporting the closure and in some cases, voluntarily restricting for cultural or ceremonial reasons only. Even though border escapement was met by Alaska this year, there are significant productivity concerns with the 2014 run as well as longer term implications that need to be factored into the management of the Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook stocks.

The First Nation of Na-cho Nyak Dun (NNDNFN) and the Tr'ondek Hwech'in (TH) have released statements in support of a zero "0" allocation harvest of Yukon River Chinook and have reinforced concerns regarding the productivity and quality of escapement in regards to the current Canadian-origin Chinook composition. Specifically, they cite the overall below the historical average run size of 85,000, the large percentage of the male 5 year age class and the below average number of robust females. As of August 12<sup>th</sup>, in addition to the NNDNFN and TH, the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Kwanlin Dun First Nation have confirmed their position of a zero allocation for harvest.

As of August 10, 2014 there were 64,232 Yukon River Chinook salmon that have passed into Canada through the Eagle Sonar. While this number exceeds the upper end of the agreed upon Interim Management Escapement Goal (IMEG of 55,000) as set under the Yukon River Salmon Agreement it is still approximately the 6<sup>th</sup> worst run on record. Prior to this year the goal had not been met by Alaska in five of the last seven years.

Pauline Frost, Chair of the Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee states that, " Yukon First Nations have shown great leadership and conservation in the interest of Yukon River Chinook. For many years, Canada was bearing the brunt of conservation. With the pro-active management in Alaska and the sacrifices on the part of Alaskan communities, we have had a year where one river, two nations, and many Governments have worked together to get as many fish on the spawning grounds as possible".

The Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee will continue to work with Yukon First Nations, Renewable Resources Councils, Commercial Fishers and the Yukon public in building awareness and education around Yukon salmon stocks. Ms. Frost states, "it will take a great deal of work over the winter working with the Yukon River Panel to ensure that we learn from this year. Our goal is to have a long term commitment to rebuild these Canadian origin Chinook stocks and have them sustain themselves for years to come".

The YSSC encourages all Yukon salmon stakeholders to participate in the weekly Yukon River Fisheries In-season Management teleconferences in order to monitor the progress of the Yukon River Chinook Run. The teleconference occurs every Tuesday from June through August, call number 1-800-315-6338, participant code: YUKON# (98566#).

Background:

The YSSC was established under Chapter 16 of the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) to act as "the main instrument of salmon management in the Yukon". The YSSC makes up the majority of the Canadian portion of the Yukon River Panel. The Yukon River Panel develops and implements agreed upon research and management programs, makes recommendations to management agencies, sets and adjusts spawning escapement objectives, and oversees the use and administration of the Restoration and Enhancement Fund.

The YSSC works throughout the year to gather information and priorities through numerous regular committee meetings, community visits and outreach activities. This information and the associated priorities are then shared and utilized where appropriate by the Canadian contingent of the Yukon River Panel.

The YSSC recommendation to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is made pursuant to Yukon First Nation Self-Government Agreements sections 16.7.17.12 and subsequently section 16.10.2.

CONTACT: Dennis Zimmermann, Executive Director – 867-336-3474    [executivedirector@yssc.ca](mailto:executivedirector@yssc.ca)

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